

Eckhart Tolle - how to touch the tiger

[Speaker 1] (0:03 - 9:43)

This is a perennial question. Always new though, because it's... Many people ask that question again and again from Joe, Joey, Joe.

Can you help me better defend myself against the pain bodies of people with whom I'm close, like my son and wife? When their pain bodies are activated for whatever reason, my pain body explodes forth. It is almost like they enjoy playing or feeding on one another.

What suggestions do you have for this situation? Well, very simple. You need to be there when it happens.

If you're not there when it happens, there's nothing you can do and I can't help you. Yeah, but how... Okay, I'm asking the next question now.

But how can I be there when it happens? I suggest that you bring presence into your everyday life in ordinary situations so that you grow in presence power, a way of speaking. You grow in presence power.

You are present when you look at a flower, you're present when you look at another human being, you're present while you drink your tea, you're present while you walk across the room rather than wanting to get to the door, you're present with every step. It's a beautiful practice. You're present while you're waiting for the elevator, you're present while you're in the elevator.

Feel the inner body, be there fully. You grow in presence power. Invite presence into your life when you're not being challenged because when you're being challenged and you haven't invited presence into your life in non-challenging times, you're not going to sustain presence when you're being challenged.

Unless perhaps it's a life and death challenge in which case it could still happen. But normal challenges. If you're not present in non-challenging situations, then how are you going to sustain presence when you're facing a pain body?

Either somebody else's or yours. Usually they go together. So when I say be there when it happens is what that means.

Be conscious of what is happening at that moment. Realize that it is the pain body. Be there as the awareness rather than as a reaction.

Be there when, if you should still react even then, can you be there as the awareness behind your reaction and sense, feel that, feel anger arising that wants to feed the other

person's pain body. Can you feel it at the moment of it happening? Can you feel it when the other person's pain body, can you see how the other person's pain body is controlling his or her mind, speaking through his or her mind, saying all the right things that are designed to make you react so that you can feed their pain body.

Can you be aware as the presence there while this is happening? It's a beautiful practice. One of the great spiritual practices is awareness while the pain body is active, whether it's somebody else's or yours or both together.

If you're very aware in the presence of somebody else's pain body, your pain body won't arise, or you may just feel the beginnings of it. Now, awareness doesn't push anything down. Awareness is like light.

The light shines on it and the pain body comes up and then hits the light of consciousness from where you can sense it. And the pain body doesn't like to live in the light of consciousness. It withdraws quickly when it encounters the light of consciousness.

It's like certain animals, they like the darkness. If you shine a spotlight on a rat, it'll run away. It prefers the dark corner.

So if you shine the light of consciousness on the pain body, it can't survive in it for very long. It will withdraw again. So by that I mean you consciously sense it as an energy field in yourself or in the other person.

And you're there as presence. It doesn't mean that now you're going to immediately dissolve the other person's pain body. That may not happen, or it may happen.

In exceptional cases, it can happen. But don't expect it to happen. Don't expect this practice to dissolve somebody else's pain body.

At least you're not contributing to the growth of this other person's pain body. And then you'll see what happens. The pain body will make one attempt, and another attempt, and another attempt to draw you into a reaction.

At some point, the best response may be to walk away for a while and hope that the pain body will exhaust itself. Because when you walk away and the other person has nobody else, the other person's pain body has nobody else to get a reaction from. It will go into the person's mind and it will get then its food from negative thinking.

Pain bodies love negative thinking. It feeds on negative thinking. And then you come back after an hour, and it might have subsided.

The important thing is to make it into a spiritual practice. Be alert. You might, if you live, this questioner has son and wife, it seems to be, the pain body mainly comes through his

son and his wife.

So here, you might even know that certain situations are likely to bring it up, so you can be already very alert. Or if the pain body comes regularly, every week or so, you can say, oh, a week has passed. It's very soon it'll happen again.

So you can be very alert. Like, you go, it'll want some kind of trigger. The slightest thing that you can say could be misinterpreted so that the pain body can use it.

So you have to be very alert and non-reactive and just be there as, again, be there as the aware presence. The slightest emotion, the pain body will try to get hold of that and then make it into some negative emotional feeling. This is a little bit like, let's say, you're encountering a wild and dangerous dog in the street or you're walking somewhere and you get this dog that comes towards you and you know, you can immediately know that the dog is dangerous and the dog is looking for some kind of emotion in you, fear, for example.

If you can be absolutely present, it is unlikely, although I'm not guaranteeing anything, it is unlikely that the dog will attack you because it is seeking some to link into some kind of fear, emotional fear presence or aggression or fear, and then it'll go in. If you can remain absolutely present, it may come close, and of course, it's a great challenge. No thought in your head is part of that.

Absolute, clear, totally clear mind. Krishnamurti has a story that it happened to him once with a tiger, and he said the tiger came so close to him, a wild tiger in India, that he touched the tiger for a moment, and of course, he was totally, his mind was totally clear. The slightest thought, and he might not have survived to tell the tale, he was absolutely present.

And then you can touch the tiger, although I'm not recommending that you try it out. I'm not recommending it. It's only an example of what happened to one person.

As they say in some films, these stunts are performed by professionals. Don't try them out.